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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to devise a program of speech retraining for the college-bound Negro student that could be effected in a relatively short time and be implemented by a typical college speech department. The subjects were black students, recently graduated from high school, attending the Upward Bound program at the University of South Florida during the summer of 1971. Each student was tape-recorded reading two selections and speaking freely for two minutes; the tapes were then analyzed by the instructional staff. The students met with the four instructors for two-hour sessions, two days per week, for eight weeks. At an orientation meeting, the concept of two speech patterns was developed--one, informal, for use at home and in casual situations; the other, formal, for use in public situations. Daily drill sessions in formal speech were conducted both in general meetings and small-group sessions. At the conclusion of the eight weeks, each student's speech was again tape-recorded and analyzed. These results were then compared with the initial test results. (Author/JM)

ABSTRACT

A SPEECH IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM FOR COLLEGE-BOUND NEGRO STUDENTS

Many Negro students, planning to enter college, are handicapped by nonstandard speech habits. It was the purpose of this study, therefore, to devise a speech retraining course for the college-bound Negro student that could be effected by a typical college speech department in a relatively short time.

The subjects for the study were twenty Negro students who had recently graduated from high school and were enrolled in the Upward Bound program at the University of South Florida in the summer of 1971. The students met with four speech instructors four hours per week for eight weeks.

The program consisted of preliminary diagnostic tests, drills in articulation-pronunciation, and various game-playing, role-playing sessions. The study was conducted in both general and small-group meetings.

A post-course evaluation indicated that, in a test situation, there was group improvement in articulation-pronunciation, significant at the 1% level of confidence. In free-speech situations, improvement was minimal to none.

It was recommended that, in future speech classes of this type, a minimum of 60 hours be devoted to speech retraining; that classes meet daily in morning and afternoon sessions; that at least one-third of the meetings be devoted to supervised recording sessions; and that considerably more time be spent on motivation and the establishment of rapport between instructor and students.

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FINAL REPORT

PROJECT NO. 1-D-041

GRANT NO. OEG-4-71-0063

A SPEECH IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM FOR COLLEGE-BOUND NEGRO STUDENTS

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A SPEECH IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

FOR

COLLEGE-BOUND NEGRO STUDENTS

I PROBLEM AND OBJECTIVES

A. General

Many individuals are handicapped in the achievement of their socio-economic goals because of non-standard speech habits--including articulation-pronunciation faults, grammatical-syntactical errors, inadequacies of rate, intensity, and vocal quality, and general inexpressiveness. Even on the college level, the symptoms of non-standard speech are prevalent. At New York University, Washington Square College, for example, over a period of fifteen years (1950-1965), forty to fifty percent of all students were found to be deficient in one or more important aspects of speech and were required to register for a remedial course.*

Why should deviations in articulation, pronunciation and other speech skills handicap the individual? The most obvious reason is that oral communication must be understood or the very purpose of the communication is unrealized. Another more devious reason for adhering to certain speech standards is that society "judges" a person by his speech regardless of the intelligibility of such discourse. Thus Twomey, in a recent speech journal, states:

> At present (1963) our schools give too little impetus to speech training for all students. Yet, speech is one of the most common judgments of personality. Although speech courses are taught in most schools, too often they are electives which are shunned by the students who need speech training the most. We must work to heighten speech training; our students must become aware of the basic principles of correct "standard" pronunciation and other speech skills. (22)

In a study conducted by Joyce Buck on the effects of dialectal variations upon the attitudes of college students, it was found that speakers with standard dialect were judged to be more competent than speakers with non-standard dialect. (2)

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* From correspondence with Dr. M. Pettas, Department of Speech-English, New York University.

The ability to speak intelligibly and with some degree of "standard" dialect is especially important in the area of job training and employment. Friedman and Phiblips point out that "person to person interaction on the job is becoming increasingly vital. Communication skills are essential to vocational success on all levels ... In a job interview, a potential employee needs sufficient speaking skill to represent himself as a capable, responsible representative of the company." (6)

A government report emphasizes this same position as follows: "The days when a worker, literate or not, could learn his job simply by watching another are gone in most sectors of the economy. Now, for the would-be worker, the ability to read, write, and communicate is essential, both in learning skills and in performance on the job." (4)

Many speech problems stem from economically and culturally deprived homes. Concerning this problem, Donald Hugh Smith writes:

> Throughout America are millions of school children whose life experiences are so negative that they will have little chance for participation in full citizenship unless forces stronger than their own deprived environments intervene. Their education is a most compelling issue in American education. Its resolution requires the skill, knowledge, and creativity of all who teach or engage in educational research to save the disadvantaged children from a life of darkness. (18)

In a similar vein, but more specifically speech oriented, Richard Corbin, President, National Council of Teachers of English, states that the educational plight of the disadvantaged is "so threatening, so real, and indeed so nationally reprehensible . . . that it demands more sleeplessness of us than any nebulous threat of a nuclear holocaust . . . We cannot save the 50 million economically and culturally disadvantaged human beings who are drowning in the sea of our national affluence . . . until we have taught them . . . to speak . . ." (15)

B. The Specific Problem

The speech inadequacies of the Negro high school student is the special concern of this proposed study. The references above regarding "disadvantaged" children certainly apply to many Negro students. Further, these students, educationally deprived in general, are also handicapped by a non-standard (often unintelligible) dialect sustained an abetted by de facto segregation and the immobilization of Negro society. Myrdahl, Stevens, and Rose point out that "Negro dialect is an important cause of the Northern whites' unconscious assumption that N egroes are of a different biological type from themselves. . . . There is absolutely no biological basis for it; Negroes are as capable of pronouncing English words perfectly as whites are .... Few Negroes seem to realize that the use of the dialect augments white prejudice, at least in the North." (13)

Ruth Golden, an English teacher in the Detroit Public Schools for many years, states that the non-standard pattern of speech used by many Negro students "may not only hinder the users socially and vocationally, but may give a false impression of ignorance and lend support to prejudice." (7)

Miss Golden continues:

> . . . many Negroes, largely because of segregated housing, tend to retain group characteristics of speech. In many cases, differences in speech, which are reflected in writing, are so pronounced that many Negro students may be said to use a "second language" to which they revert as soon as they are out of the classroom . . . .
>
> I believe that the lack of speech proficiency is a contributing cause of the failure of many Negro students to enter college, the first step toward achieving their occupational goals. I also believe that the resulting frustration surely does not contribute to better human relations . . . .
>
> Vocational retardation is tied in with the fact that nonstandard speech gives a false impression of ignorance . . . . They are unaware of their habitual differences in speech pattern and the extent to which they are judged by them.
>
> Our concern is with non-standard grammatical peculiarities (and mispronunciations) which cause negative reactions in informal, as well as formal, cultural situation. (7)

Further evidence of the importance of eliminating non-standard speech patterns is indicated by Friedman and Phillips who state, "Cultivation of the ability to communicate with middle class people is particularly vital for members of racial minorities, for whom a negative stereotype offers an additional handicap. Negro leaders despair at the reluctance of businessmen to hire Negroes for responsible positions." (6)

An article in Time quotes Ford Foundation's Edward Meade: "A lot of Negroes speak with such a thick dialect that they cannot be understood by other Americans." (20) Another Time article, discussing the use of Negro actors in TV commercials, suggests, "If they sound like Negroes, they haven't a chance. They have to look like Negroes and sound like white people." (21)

An added problem for the researcher contemplating a rehabilitation program in speech for the Negro student is the apathy or antipathy of the student toward such a program. Speaking of one typical unemployed young man, Friedman and Phillips say: "He is not sure that he wants to talk and dress like others in the suburbs do, and he resents any suggestion that he make a change in his speech, his appearance, or his style of life as the price for land and cash. He does not see any glory in his condition, but he also can spot in a flash a new attempt to humiliate him." (6)

An Interdisciplinary Meeting on the Language Problems of the Disadvantaged pointed out that there was a tendency for ghetto residents to resent researchers and being studied like animals in a cage--without immediate and obvious results for the subjects. (8)

In summary, there is a definite need, today, for speech improvement education:

1. Primarily, speech must be intelligible; but speech patterns must also be socially acceptable.

2. "Disadvantaged" students need speech retraining.

3. Negro "disadvantaged" students have a special dialectal problem and would benefit from a specific retraining program.

C. Arguments Against the Speech Retraining of Negro Students who use a Nonstandard Dialect

There are some linguists and others who deplore the trend in educational systems to "eradicate" Negro dialect from the speech of black students. Basically, this argument contends that there is no one standard dialect of American-English and that to insist that only a middle-class, white pattern of speech is the only acceptable pattern is sheer folly and an indication of class arrogance and racism. In this regard, Orlando L. Taylor, of the Metropolitan Center for Applied Linguistics, writes:

> . . . most of these programs (language) are developed for black people on the assumption that they are desired or, at least, should be. Many black people interpret this attitude as racist, elitist, colonialistic, and paternalistic. Unfortunately, this attitude is frequently found inside the speech profession.
>
> Why is the above attitude racist, elitist, colonialistic, and paternalistic? It is racist because it implies that white opinions on language goals and programs for the black community are the best ones. It is elitist because it presumes that the opinions of "education specialists" are the only ones worth considering in contemplating language programs in the black community. It is colonialistic because it implies that black people should only be "permitted" to survive economically, politically, and socially if the terms of the ruling class, i.e., white, middle-class, are met. It is paternalistic because it does something for people instead of encouraging self-determination --presumably because of a feeling that the people are incapable of making decisions for themselves.
>
> . . . Black people are rejected and discriminated against because they are BLACK --not because they speak a form of Black English. (19)

William Labov, a linguist from Columbia University, though not specifically opposed to the teaching of Standard English, deplores the "language deprivation" theory advanced to account for the poor performance of children in ghetto schools:

> Unfortunately, these notions are based upon the work of educational psychologists who know very little about language and even less about Negro children. The concept of verbal deprivation has no basis in social reality. In fact, Negro children in the urban ghettos receive a great deal of verbal stimulation, hear more well-formed sentences than middle-class children, and participate fully in a high verbal culture. (11)

Labov, in the same article, suggests that teachers should know as much as possible about Negro Nonstandard English as a communicative system and that "the methods used in teaching English as a foreign language are recommended. . . . All communities agree that standard English is the proper medium for formal writing and public communication." (11)

An interesting exchange of viewpoints on the place of language retraining in the schools was recently aired in two issues of Spectra, the newsletter of the Speech Communication Association. The first Spectra article (Aug. 1971) reprinted an editorial from The Crisis, an official organ of the NAACP which, in part, stated:

> The New York Times and the Daily News report that New York City's Brooklyn College has enrolled some 50 Negro students in a course in "black" English taught as their native language by Miss Carol Reed, described by the News as "a young linguist who heads the language curriculum research project at Brooklyn College." The project is financed by a $65,000 Ford Foundation grant.
>
> . . . . .
>
> The so-called black English is basically the same slovenly English spoken by the South's undereducated poor white population.
>
> What our children need . . . is training in basic English which today is as near an international language as any in the world.
>
> . . . . .
>
> Let our children have the opportunity, and be encouraged, to learn the language which will best enable them to comprehend modern science and technology, equip them to communicate intelligently with other English-speaking people of all races, and to share in the exercise of national power.
>
> . . . . .
>
> . . . It is time to repudiate this black nonsense and to take appropriate action against institutions which foster it in craven recapitulation to the fantasies of the extreme black cultists and their pale and spineless sycophants. (12)

In the October, 1971 issue of Spectra, the above article was challenged by Jeutonne Brewer, a linguist from North Carolina A & T University, who stated:

. . . The language information in the article (quoted from the Crisis) is erroneous.

. . . . .

Systematic differences (in grammatical structure), i.e., regular and predictable differences, are not careless or sloppy, or slovenly. . . . They are merely different from the speech usually referred to as standard English.

. . . . .

Linguists have generally advocated one of two positions concerning the admission of dialects other than standard English in the classroom: (1) Society's prejudice should be changed not the child's language system. (2) Children who speak a nonstandard dialect should be given the opportunity and encouraged to learn a form of standard English. However, their home language system should be respected. (1)*

Without becoming too involved in the controversy, it is the position held in this study that the second contention, above, is the most reasonable and that those children whose only language is nonstandard English, for whatever reason, should indeed be "encouraged" to learn a form of standard English.**

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* For a synthesis of views on the desirability of teaching standard English to black children, see Davenport Plumer's article, "A Summary of Environmentalist Views and Some Educational Implications," in Language and Poverty: Perspectives on a Theme. (11)

** The entire issue of The Speech Teacher, March 1970 is devoted to the "Black" viewpoint in speech communication.

II DESCRIPTION OF THE PRESENT STUDY

A. Purpose

The purpose of the study was to devise a program of speech retraining for the college-bound Negro student that could be effected in a relatively short time and be implemented by a typical college speech department.

B. Significance

As pointed out previously, there is a great need for speech improvement in our schools today, regardless of special problems of national and racial background. As Smith states; "The mandate to teachers of speech and to other teachers of language arts should be clear: the nation's communicative defectives must be taught to use the language effectively if they are to have their rightful opportunities to economic security and to social growth." (18)

The communication problem of the Negro student, however, is further complicated by racial animosities and social barriers. Not only must he overcome the handicaps of nonstandard pronunciations and grammatical inaccuracies, but he must attempt to remove the stigma of dialect from his speech. Thus, it is felt that this study has greater significance than other more general speech-improvement studies. It is an attack on one of the basic factors that contribute to racial animosity, an attempt to alleviate the age-old problem of prejudice of a considerable number of white Americans against the black citizen.

C. Instructional Personnel

Principal Investigator:	Merritt B. Jones, Ph D,	USF
First Assistant:	Emilio Perez, Ph D	"
Grad. Assistant:	Mrs. June Krog	"
Grad. Assistant:	Miss Nancy White	"
Student Assistant:	Mrs. Gloria East	"

D. Subjects

The subjects for the study were twenty black students, recently graduated from high school, attending the Upward Bound program at the University of South Florida during the summer of 1971. A table describing the student participants follows:

Student	Age	Sex	County of Residence	High School Attended	College Choice
1	17	F	Hillsboro	Middleton	Wilberforce
2	17	F	Hillsboro	Middleton	Clark
3	18	F	Pasco	Mickens	Fort Valley
4	17	F	Hillsboro	Blake	Clark
5	17	F	Hillsboro	Hillsboro	Wilberforce
6	18	M	Hillsboro	Plant City	Benedict
7	18	F	Hillsboro	Blake	Xavier of La.
8	17	M	Hillsboro	King	Bethune-Cookman
9	18	M	Hillsboro	Blake	Grambling
10	17	M	Pasco	Mickens	Bethune-Cookman
11	17	F	Pasco	Pasco Comp	Hillsboro JC
12	17	F	Pasco	Pasco Comp	Wilberforce
13	18	F	Pasco	Pasco Comp	Clark
14	17	F	Polk	Lakeland	Tenn. State
15	19	M	Pasco	Pasco Comp	St. Leo
16	17	M	Pasco	Pasco Comp	Miami-Dade
17	17	F	Pasco	Mickens	Wilberforce
18	17	F	Polk	Lakeland	Morris-Brown
19	17	F	Sarasota	Riverview	Manatee JC
20	17	F	Pasco	Pasco Comp	Bethune-Cookman

E. Speech Diagnostic Procedures

1. Tape Recording Procedure

At the first class meeting, each student was tape-recorded. The recorded material consisted of two reading selections ("Arthur, the Rat" and "My Grandfather") and two minutes of free speech prompted by questions from the recording instructor.

The recorded tapes were analyzed by the instructional staff who were advised to "grade each student for clarity and intelligibility of expression on a numerical scale of 60 to 100 representing a continuum range of poor to excellent." The staff members were further advised to judge the recordings relative to the performance of previous college freshmen encountered in speech classes. The phonetic analysis of each student's speech indicated sound substitutions, distortions, transpositions, incorrect syllable stress, and deviations of pitch, rate, and voice quality.

2. Student Mean Scores and Phonetic Analysis

Student	Mean Score	Phonetic Analysis
1	82	ɛ/æ, ɪ/ɛ, a/aɪ, d/t, ar/ɔr, n/ŋ, e/ɛ, -t, -k
2	86	d/ð, n/ŋ, ɪ/ɛ, o/ɔ, e/ɛ, +t, -k, -l, -d, -ð, -t
3	78	a/aɪ, ɛ/æ, i/ɪ, a/au, o/ɔr, o/ɔɪ, n/ŋ, -t
4	71	n/ŋ, a/aɪ, t/θ, d/t, i/ɪ, +g, -g, -d, -s, æks/æsk
5	85	n/ŋ, a/aɪ, d/t, i/ɪ, au/ʌ, o/ɔɪ, -k, -t
6	62	d/ð, n/ŋ, i/ɪ, +t, -p, -z, -ʃ, -t
7	84	ɛ/æ, a/aɪ, n/ŋ, o/ɔɪ, d/ð, d/t, +g, -d, -t
8	87	a/aɪ, n/ŋ, o/ɔɪ, d/ð, -k, -ð
9	76	n/ŋ, o/ɔɪ, d/ð, i/ɪ, au/ʌ, +g, +t, -k
10	68	ɛ/æ, d/ð, ɛɪə/ɛr, t/θ, i/ɪ, -d, -t, -p, -l
11	77	ɛ/æ, a/ɔ, o/ɔr, əɪɪə/ɪr, e/a, ɪ/ɛ, +t, -k, -p, -s, -l, -t

12	90	a/ɔ, d/t, ɪ/ɛ, +t, -k, -l
13	85	æ/aɪ, d/ð, ə/ɪu, a/əɪ, ɪ/ɛ, -t, ɔr
14	70	a/aɪ, n/ŋ, æə/æ, d/ð, a/aɪ, ɪ/ɛ, o/a, +t, -t, -d, -l, -g
15	63	ɛ/æ, d/ð, ɔ/ɔɪ, +t, -t, -l, -g, many Transpositions + distortions
16	68	æKS/æSK, n/ŋ, ɔ/ɔɪ, i/ɪ, ɪ/ɛ, a/əɪ, +t, -r, -t, -l, -g
17	68	æKS/æSK, i/ɪ, o/ɔɪ, ɪ/ɛ, a/aɪ, vowel sounds
18	83	æ/ɛ, i/ɪ, d/ð, ɪ/ɛ, a/aɪ, n/ŋ, -t
19	73	d/ð, n/ŋ, a/ʌ, æə/æ, -l, -z, -t
20	78	a/aɪ, d/t, d/ð, o/ɔɪ, ɛ/æ, i/ɪ, o/ɔr, -s

In summary, the speech of the group was characterized by vowel distortion and substitutions, consonant additions and omissions, and some transposition of sounds.

Some typical mispronunciations were:

once	wʌnst
rat	rɛt
mind	mænd
the	də (or) dɪ
asked	æKst

always awiz

still stil

short sot

more mou

going goin

F. General Procedures

The students serving as subjects for the program met with the four instructors for two-hour sessions, two days per week, for eight weeks. At the beginning of the program, each student was diagnostically tested using test materials consisting of sentences, oral reading selections, and free-speech assignments adapted from Jones and Pettas, Speech Improvement: A Practical Program. (10)

After the initial tests and interviews, the students met with the instructional staff for a preliminary session at which time the program was explained. The concept of two speech patterns was developed--one, informal, for use at home and in casual situations; the other, formal, for use in public situations. The emphasis in this class, it was explained, would be placed on the formal type of speaking. At this point, a motivational discussion was conducted by the director of the program.

The retraining program was concerned with the improvement of the over-all language pattern of the students, including articulation-pronunciation, word choice, grammar, intonational patterns, and word-per-minute rate.

Daily drill sessions were conducted both in general meetings and small-group sessions two of which were tape-recording drills. The class drill sessions utilized various retraining procedures as follows:

1. Explanation of a particular deviation by the instructor.

2. Demonstration of the deviation and recommended form by the instructor.

3. Standard retraining drills for articulation:
   a. Ear training: recognition, identification.
   b. Sound production: in isolation, in nonsense syllables.
   c. Sound production: words, phrases, sentences.
   d. Negative practice: words, phrases, sentences.

4. Comparative (standard-nonstandard) drills on other aspects of oral language.

5. Impromptu talks for carry-over purposes.

6. Role-playing for carry-over in free speech situations.

The tape-recording drills were specifically designed for ear-training, imitation of models, and student performance. The tape sessions were supervised at all times.

The drill sessions were preceded by general meetings of the combined groups for motivational purposes and to discuss the progress made in the drill sessions.

At the conclusion of the eight weeks, each student's speech was again tape-recorded and the tapes were analyzed and compared to the initial recordings by the instructors. On the basis of this analysis, a speech improvement rating was determined for each student in the program.

III BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVES

A. The student, in a drill or test situation, should be able to produce the correct vowel, diphthong or consonant sound in common everyday words. He should be able to control the omission of consonant sounds (especially on word endings), the addition of sounds, the substitution of one sound for another, and the transposition of sounds in certain words.

B. The student should demonstrate some facility in carrying over his newly acquired speech habits in such activities as talks before the class, small group discussion, and interview situations.

C. The student should be able to demonstrate an improvement in general interpersonal communication activities as evidenced by his skills in oral reading, classroom talks, and participation in group discussion.

IV CLASS ACTIVITY SYLLABUS

(Text: Jones & Pettas, Speech Improvement: A Practical Program)

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* See Black, John, ed., "Intelligibility Game," (Springfield, Ill., C. Thomas, Publisher.)

CLASS ACTIVITY SYLLABUS continued---

Date	Class Activity	Text Materials
June 17	General Meeting - Introduction to course. Diagnostic readings.	
22	General Meeting - Motivational lecture. Intelligibility game.*	
24	GM - Basic speech principles - 20 min. Small-group drills - ng sound.	Unit 4
29	GM - Intro. to th sounds - 20 min. Small-group drills - th sounds.	Unit 3
July 1	GM - Intro. to t, d, n, l sounds. Small-group drills - t, d, n, l.	Unit 1
6	GM - Intelligibility game. Small-group drills - all sounds to date - ear training, contrasts, negative practice.	
8	GM - Explanation of recording session. Small-group tape-recording sessions.	
13	GM - Intro. to vowels and diphthongs. Small-group drills - vowels and diphthongs.	Units 5-9
15	GM - Oral check-up on all sounds to date. Small-group drills - phrases, sentences	
20	GM - Intro. to vocal variety. Small-group drills - vocal variety.	Units 10, 11
22	GM - Intro. to oral reading. Small-group oral readings.	
27	GM - Tape recording drills - models Individual interviews - Mrs. East.	
29	GM - Intro. to public speaking. Small-group extemp. speeches.	
Aug. 3	GM - Intro. to group discussion. Small-group discussion practice.	
5	GM - Student presentations - articulation paragraph, oral readings, impromptus. Begin final tapings.	
10	Final tapings continued. GM - Social hour and presentation of awards.	

V CONTROL GROUP

A control group consisting of 20 Upward Bound students who did not elect the speech course was tape recorded using the same recording materials as that of the speech group.

VI RESULTS OF THE STUDY *

A. Comparative Mean Scores (Staff Ratings) ** Before and After the Speech Course.

Student	Mean Score Before Course	Mean Score After Course	Points of Improvement
1	84	84	0
2	88	92	4
3	80	80	0
4	73	78	5
5	87	87	0
6	64	68	4
7	86	88	2
8	89	91	2
9	78	86	8
10	70	73	3
11	79	79	0
12	92	96	4
13	87	89	2
14	72	81	9
N-14			M- 3.07

* Of the original twenty subjects, three dropped out of the Upward Bound program for personal reasons; an additional three failed to be present for the final recording session.

** Scores were assigned on a 60-100 continuum with 60 representing "very poor" and 100 representing "excellent."

B. Discussion

In the table above, it can be seen that four subjects showed no improvement, whereas ten subjects showed improvement ranging from two to nine points. Applying the t test for significance of difference between the means, a t score of 4.005 is obtained or t 3.012 at a confidence level of 1%. In other words, it may be assumed that the students, as a group, displayed a significant improvement in the final recording compared to the initial recording.

In the control group, ten students were available for the second recording. In analyzing the two scores, before the course and after the course, of the ten students, no difference in rating was discernible.

In interpreting the recording scores above, certain qualifications must be made. The scores were based on a test situation primarily concerned with articulation with some attention to voice and rate. The students knew they were being tested and responded with an awareness and some degree of control of the sounds and words being tested. A survey of instructors indicated that, from a subjective viewpoint, the free-speech patterns of the majority of the students showed considerably less improvement than the controlled speech patterns. In other words, carry-over of the newly acquired speech habits was minimal.

This lessened improvement in the carry-over of newly acquired speech habits may have been due to the following factors:

1. The students in the program were carrying other courses in the Upward Bound program. Their schedules allowed them only four hours per week for the speech course.

2. The twenty students who elected to take the speech course were not screened for severity of speech difficulties. Thus, some of the students did comparatively well on the diagnostic test and their degree of improvement was less apparent. On the other hand, it may be assumed that, because the speech course was elective, some students who needed the course did not sign up for it.

3. There was a high rate of absenteeism due to heavy rains, specially scheduled field trips, "illness", and other personal reasons. A lack of adequate motivation may have been a contributing factor to this problem.

4. There were some instances of negativism among the students--toward the course and toward the white instructors. Again, a lack of initial motivation may have contributed to this attitude.

In summary, the fourteen students who completed the course and were available for the final tape recordings demonstrated (as a group) that, in a drill situation, their speech patterns had improved to a significant extent. On the other hand, the degree of carry-over in such situations as interviews and small-group discussion was limited. Achievement of the third objective--to demonstrate an improvement in general interpersonal communication activities was insignificant.

VII RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE SPEECH PROGRAMS

A. A considerably greater degree of control must be had over the selection of students for a speech course, the class scheduling of the students, and the absentee problem. Ideally, Speech and Language Arts should dominate the term's work.

B. A minimum of 60 hours should be devoted to speech improvement and such carry-over skills as interpersonal communication, oral reading, and talks before groups. The speech class should meet for at least ten hours per week preferably on a daily basis with one meeting scheduled in the morning and one in the afternoon. At least one-third of class time should be spent on tape recording (including audio-video) sessions accentuating ear training, imitation of models, and solo practice. These sessions should be closely supervised at all times.

C. The students participating in the speech program should be interviewed in advance of the program for purposes of motivation and to screen out those who would not benefit from this particular type of program. In the interview process, the students should understand the exact nature of the course and indicate a willingness to participate whole-heartedly in the program.

D. The first three meetings of the speech course should be devoted to motivation and the establishment of rapport between the instructor and students. If, at the end of the three sessions, a student is uncertain of his speech goals or questions the value of the course, he should be encouraged to drop the course. Strong motivation is essential to a successful program of speech improvement.

E. If more than one instructor is involved in the program, several preliminary instructor meetings will be needed for discussion and agreement on goals and methodology of the speech improvement program.

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